



U.S. Immigration  
and Customs  
Enforcement

# News Release

February 23, 2005

## **RECORD NUMBER OF CRIMINAL ALIENS REMOVED FROM ARIZONA DETENTION FACILITY LAST MONTH**

ELOY, Arizona – U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) removed 766 criminal aliens from the Federal Alien Detention Facility here in January, the most ever in a single month.

ICE officials announced the milestone today and advised the agency is on track to equal or exceed that total this month. The previous monthly record for criminal alien removals from the Eloy facility was 730, set back in July 2002.

“Identifying and removing criminal aliens is one of ICE’s top enforcement priorities,” said Philip C. Crawford, field office director for ICE detention and removal operations in Arizona. “Taking criminal aliens off of our streets and ultimately sending them out of the country is crucial to ICE’s mission to keep our communities and our country safe.”

The aliens deported from the Eloy facility last month had convictions for a wide variety of violations, including narcotics trafficking, human smuggling, money laundering, hostage taking, kidnapping, and federal firearms charges.

All of the deported criminals were originally sent to Eloy to serve time for their federal criminal convictions. While incarcerated, the aliens appeared before immigration judges in hearings conducted at the joint ICE and U.S. Bureau of Prison (BOP) facility. As a result of those hearings, the aliens received final removal orders while still incarcerated on criminal charges. The process dramatically reduces the time required to repatriate the criminal aliens once they come into ICE custody after serving out their sentences.

In the first four months of this fiscal year (October 2004 through January 2005), ICE deported more than 3,000 criminal aliens from the Eloy facility. Mexican nationals account for more than 80 percent of those removals. The criminal aliens being returned to Mexico are transported by bus to the border at Nogales. Criminal aliens of other nationalities are deported using commercial or chartered aircraft.

# ICE #

*U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement was established in March 2003 as the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security. ICE is comprised of five integrated divisions that form a 21st century law enforcement agency with broad responsibilities for a number of key homeland security priorities.*